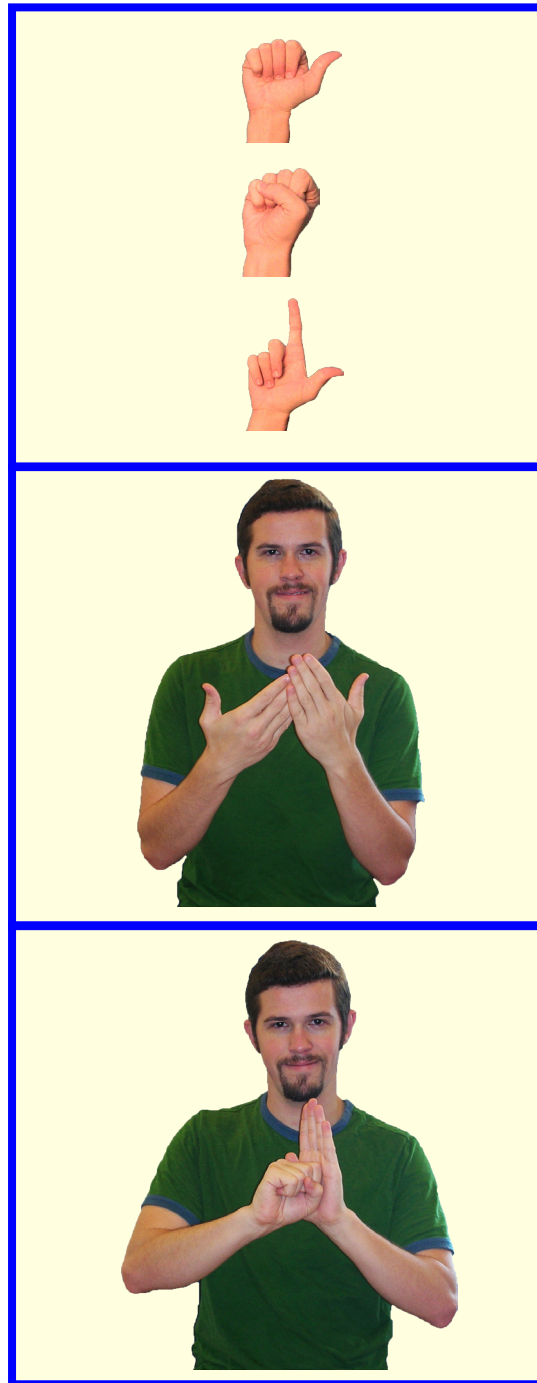


# SignWriting

*Sign Languages Are Written Languages!*



**American Sign Language  
Hand Symbols**

by  
Adam Frost and Valerie Sutton

# SignWriting

*Sign Languages Are Written Languages!*

## American Sign Language Hand Symbols

by  
Adam Frost & Valerie Sutton

ISBN: 978-0-914336-82-2  
First Edition

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**The SignWriting System was first  
invented by Valerie Sutton in 1974.**

**This book documents the hand symbols used  
in American Sign Language (ASL) based on  
the International SignWriting Alphabet 2010  
by Valerie Sutton**

**All photos are photographed  
by Adam Frost.  
All photos are of Adam's own hands!**

All symbols were enlarged and  
graphically perfected by Adam Frost.

The ISWA 2008 and 2010 are two symbolsets  
made possible by the encouragement and  
software development of Stephen E. Slevinski, Jr

This manual is posted on the web:  
SignWriting Lessons Books  
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# ASL Hand Symbols

by  
Adam Frost & Valerie Sutton



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This book uses some of the hand symbols of the  
International SignWriting Alphabet 2010  
by Valerie Sutton

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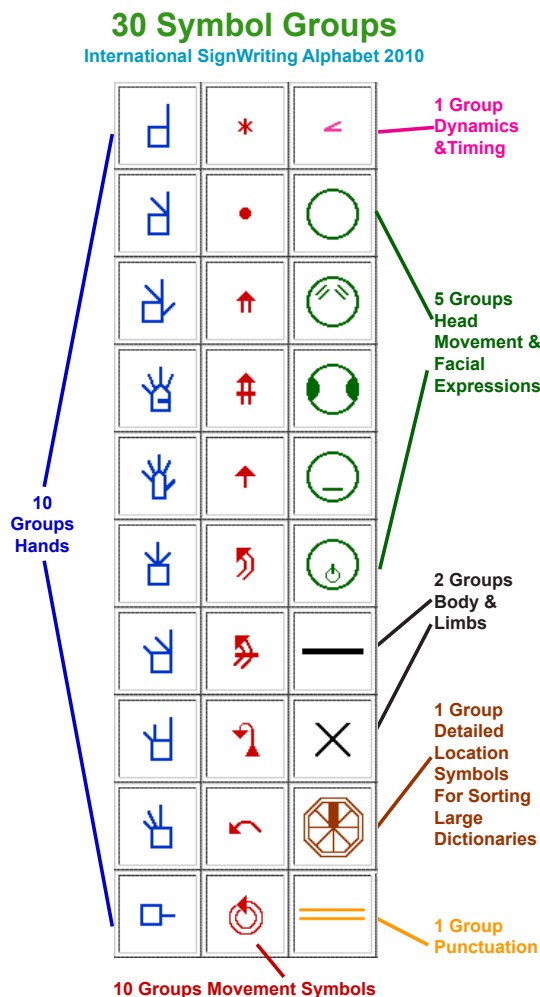
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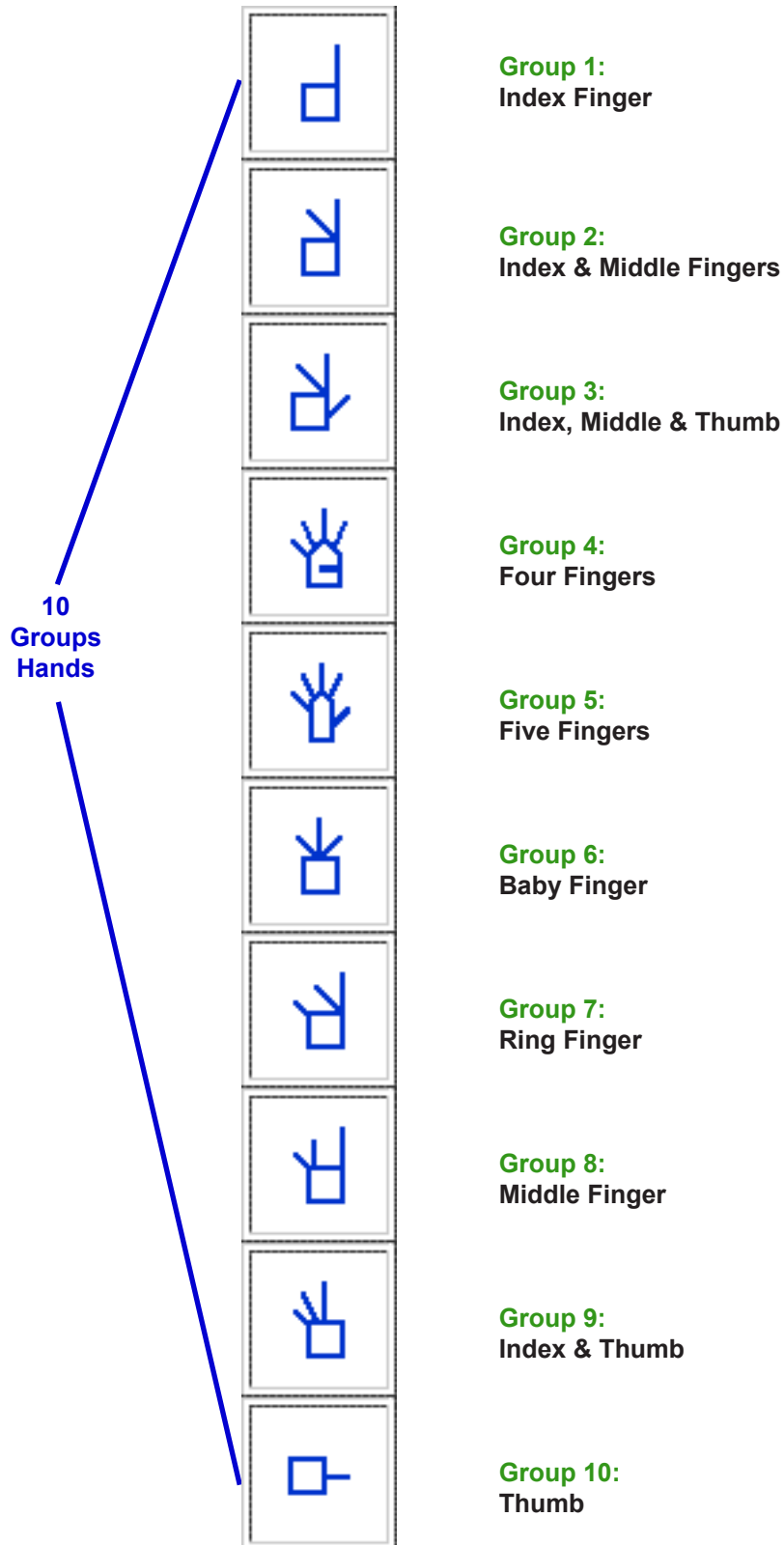
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## 10 Hand Symbol Groups

in the International SignWriting Alphabet 2010



## Expressive Front View

Signs are written from the signer's expressive viewpoint. Imagine standing BEHIND the signer, copying what the signer does and feels.



### Palm of Hand

The palm of the hand is written with a white or hollow symbol.

#### Front View Parallel with Wall Plane

The hand is parallel to the Front Wall. The white symbol shows that the palm faces towards your body, towards the reader.



### Side of Hand

The side of the hand is written with a symbol that is half-white and half-dark. The half-white section shows the direction of the palm. The half-dark section represents the back of the hand.

#### Front View Parallel with Wall Plane

The hand is parallel to the Front Wall. The thumb of the hand faces towards your body.



### Back of Hand

The back of the hand is written with a black or filled-in symbol.

#### Front View Parallel with Wall Plane

The hand is parallel to the Front Wall. The black symbol shows that the back of the hand faces towards your body.

## Expressive Top View

Signs are written from the signer's expressive viewpoint. Imagine looking down on the position of the signer, from a bird's eye view.



### Palm of Hand

#### Top View Parallel with Floor Plane

The hand is parallel to the floor. You are looking down at your palm from overhead. The white symbol has a space at the knuckle joint representing the Horizon Line. A hand symbol with the Horizon Line crossing over the knuckles means the hand is "parallel with the floor" read from the Top View.



### Side of Hand

#### Top View Parallel with Floor Plane

The hand is parallel to the floor. You are looking down at the side of your hand (your thumb) from overhead. The hand symbol has a space at the knuckle joint representing the Horizon Line. A hand symbol with the Horizon Line crossing over the knuckles means the hand is "parallel with the floor" read from the Top View.



### Back of Hand

#### Top View Parallel with Floor Plane

The hand is parallel to the floor. You are looking down at the back of your hand from overhead. The hand symbol has a space at the knuckle joint, representing the Horizon Line. A hand symbol with the Horizon Line crossing over the knuckles means the hand is "parallel with the floor" read from the Top View.



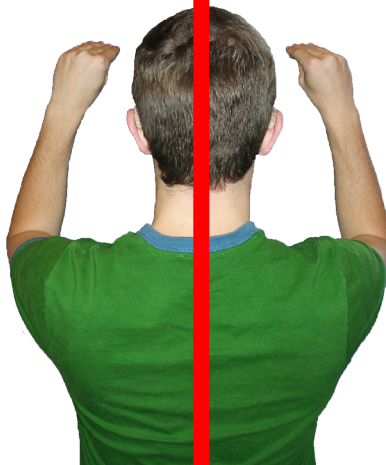
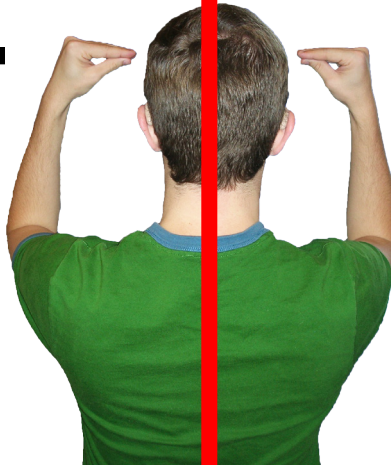
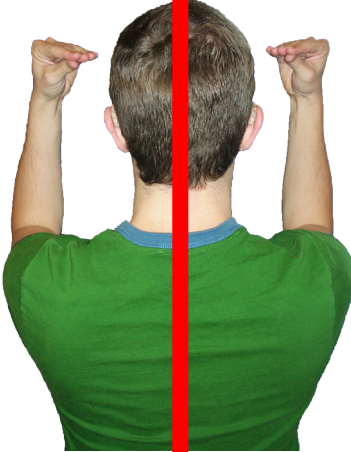


## Hands Relate to Center

In the International SignWriting Alphabet, all hand symbols are designed to relate to the Center of the Body. Imagine a Center Line going down the center of your body. The **Majority of Action Fingers** are directed towards the center. Left hands are written to the left of the Center Line. Right hands are written to the right of the Center Line.

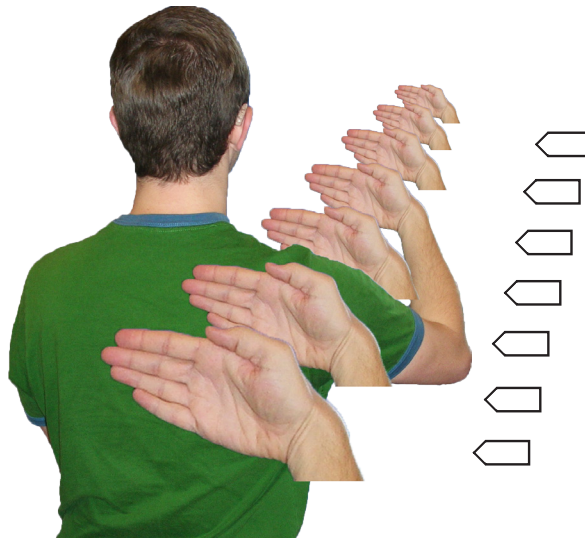
Left Hand

Right Hand



## The Wall Plane

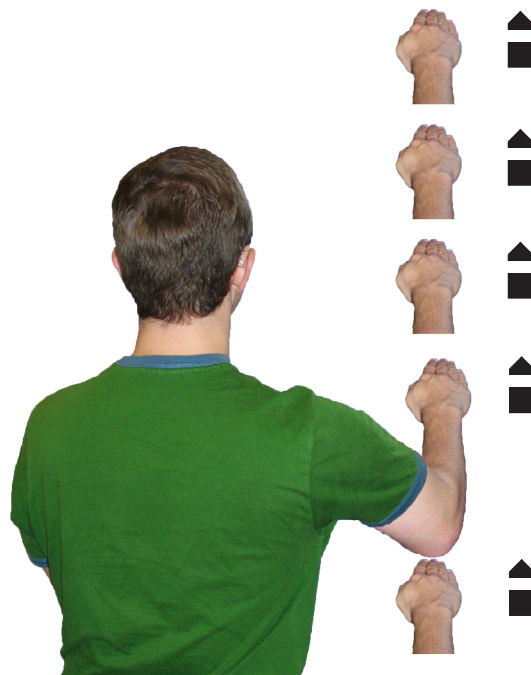
Hand symbols parallel to the Front Wall look the same whether they are far from the chest, close to or touching the chest, or behind the body. You can FEEL the position of the palm facing. It remains the same symbol no matter how close or far it is.



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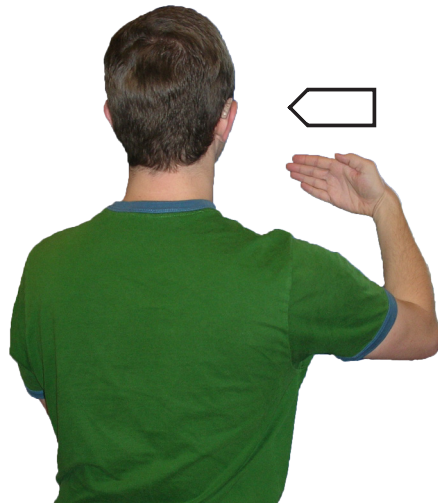
## The Floor Plane

Hand symbols parallel to the Floor look the same whether they are high above the head, in the middle in front of your chest, or low at hip level. You can FEEL the position of the palm facing. It remains the same symbol no matter how high or low it is.



## Hands Pointing to the Side

Hand symbols with the fingers pointing to the side can be written from the Front View, parallel to the Front Wall Plane, or from the Top View, parallel to the Floor Plane. Both symbols are correct, since side-to-side can be seen from the Front View or the Top View. Choose to write the simpler symbols seen from the Front View, parallel to the Front Wall, since they are less complicated for quick reading:

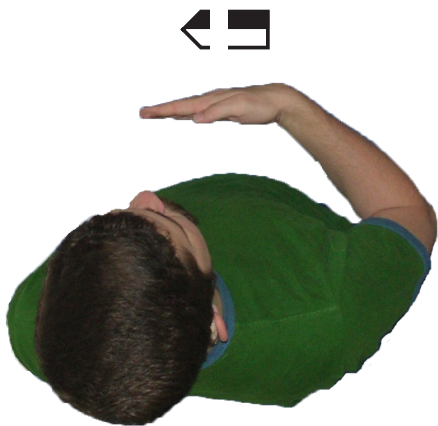


### Choose the Front View

The Front View writes the palm of the hand with a white or hollow symbol.

#### Front View Is Easier to Read

When the fingers point to the side wall, it is best to write the symbol parallel to the Front Wall because the symbol is easier to read.



### Top View Is Correct but...

The Top View of the hand is written with a half-white half-dark symbol with the Horizon Line across the knuckles.

#### Top View Is Harder to Read

When the fingers point to the side wall, it is correct to write the symbol parallel to the Floor, but it is harder to read and therefore not recommended.



## Chapter 1



### Group 1: Index


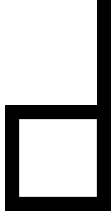










All Hands With One Action Finger:

**The Index Finger**



## Index

01-01-001









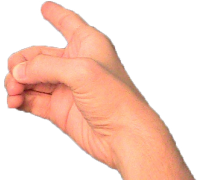



		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane





## Index on Circle


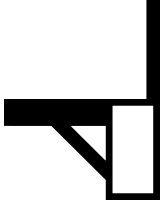

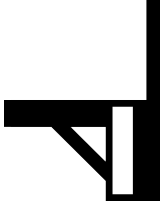

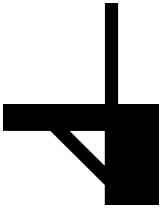

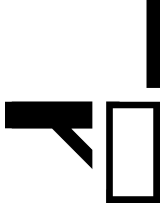

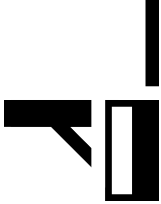

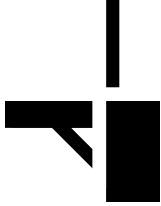
01-01-002

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane




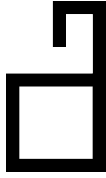



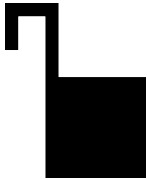

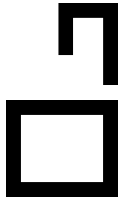

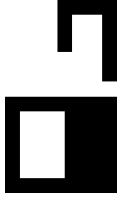


## Index on Angle

01-01-006

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane






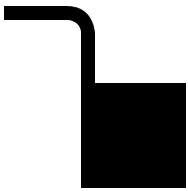





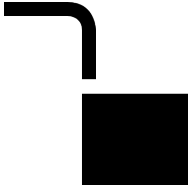
## Index Bent

01-01-007

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Index Cup

01-01-011

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Chapter 2



### Group 2: Index Middle


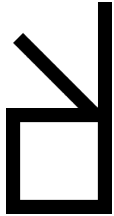





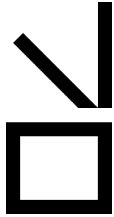




All Hands With Two Action Fingers:  
**Index Finger & Middle Finger**





## Index Middle


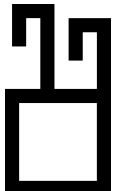



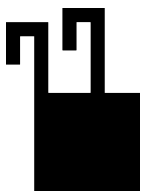

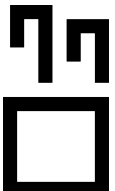



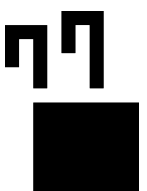
01-02-001

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Middle Bent


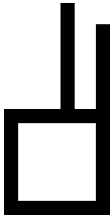





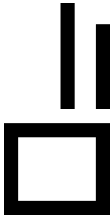




01-02-003

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane




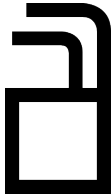



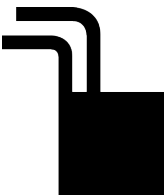


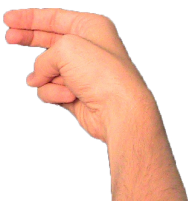


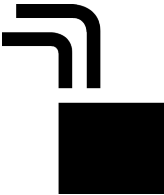
## Index Middle Unit

01-02-008

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Index Middle Unit, Cup









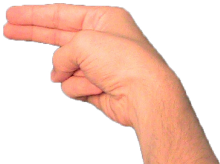



01-02-011

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Middle Unit, Hinge






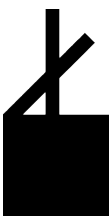






01-02-012

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Middle Cross




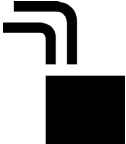








01-02-013

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Finger Direction Is Meaningful

Two ways to write the same position: The Top View of the Back of the Hand can be written at a slant. Some writers feel this looks more like real life, because the fingers are directed down.

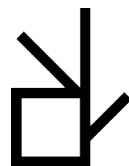
		
		
		
		

OR

both angles are correct



## Chapter 3




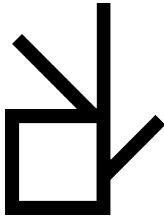

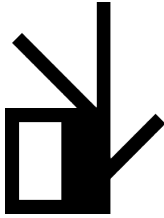

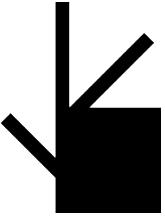

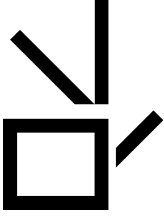



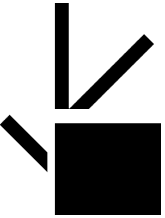
### Group 3: Index Middle Thumb

All Hands With Three Action Fingers:

**Index Finger, Middle Finger & Thumb**


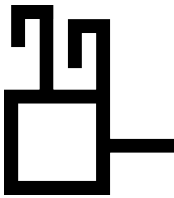

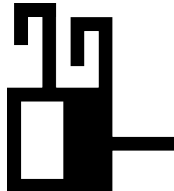

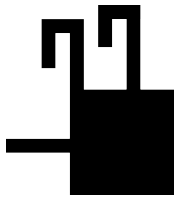

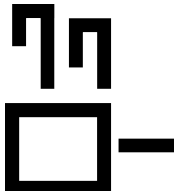

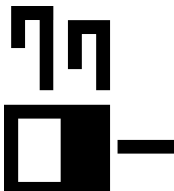

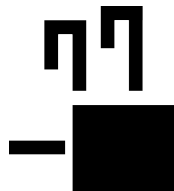
## Index Middle Thumb

01-03-001

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Index Middle Bent, Thumb Straight


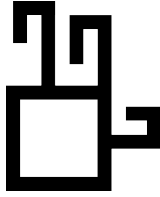

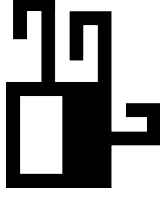

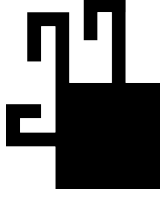

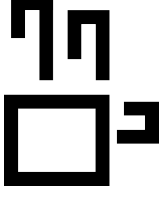

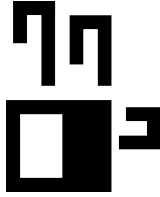

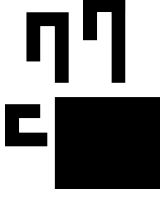
01-03-004

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Middle Thumb Bent


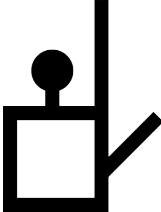

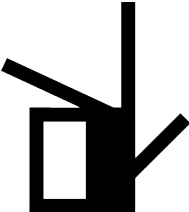



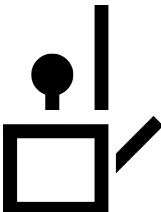

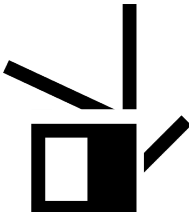

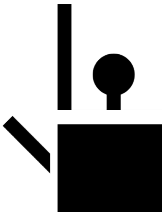
01-03-005

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Up, Middle Hinge, Thumb Side

01-03-007

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Index Middle Thumb Cup


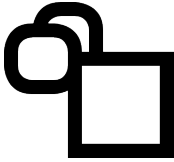

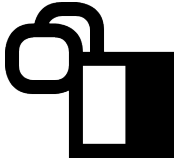

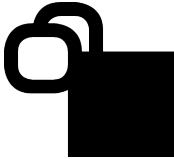

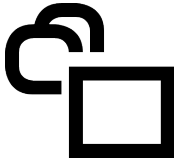

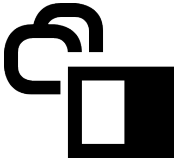

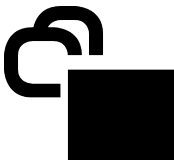
01-03-011

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



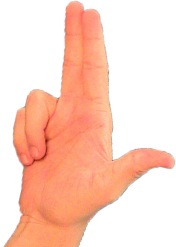
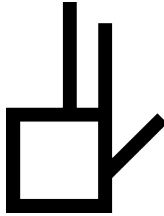

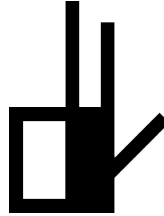

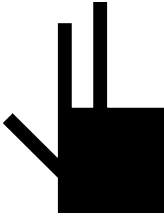
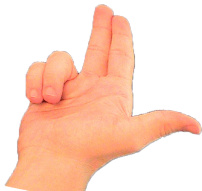
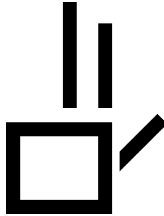

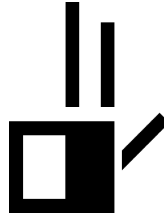

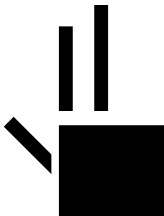
## Index Middle Thumb Circle

01-03-012

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane


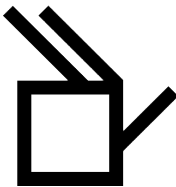

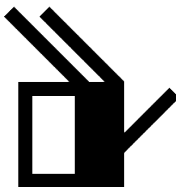

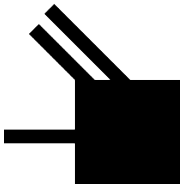
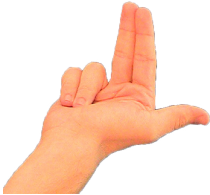
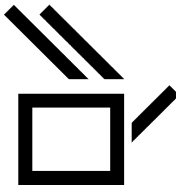



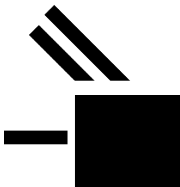
## Index Middle Unit, Thumb Side

01-03-016

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Index Middle Unit Hinge, Thumb Side


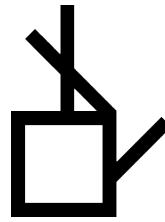

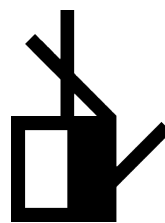

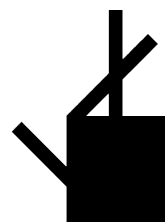

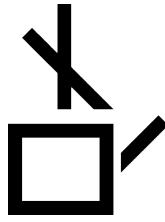

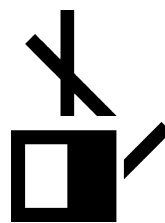
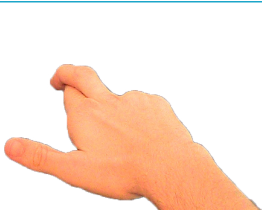
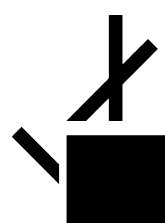
01-03-021

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane




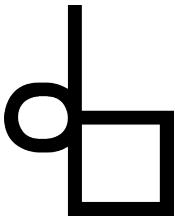

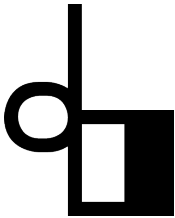

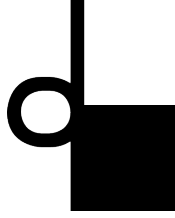

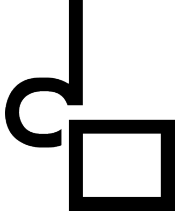

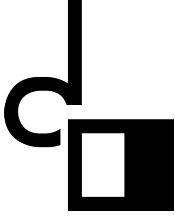

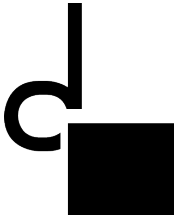
## Index Middle Cross, Thumb Side

01-03-022

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Middle Thumb Circle, Index Up









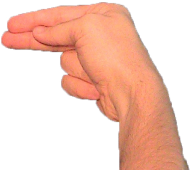



01-03-027

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Middle Thumb, Angle


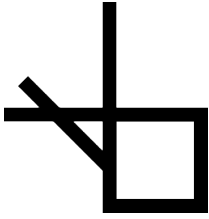

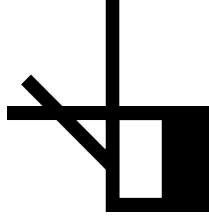

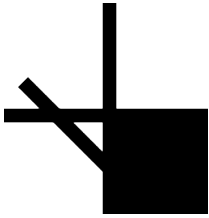

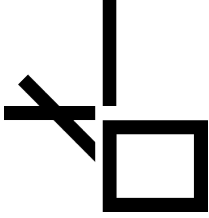
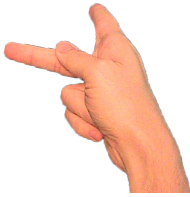
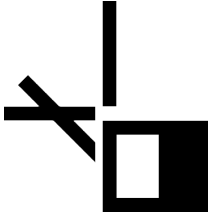
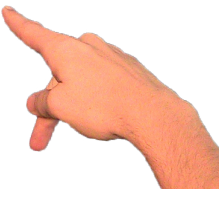
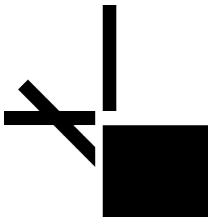
01-03-034

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane






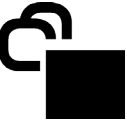





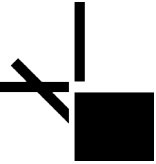
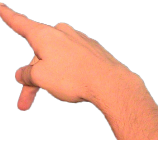

## Middle Thumb Angle Out, Index Up

01-03-035

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Finger Direction Is Meaningful

Different ways to write the same position: The Top View of the Back of the Hand can be written at a slant. Some writers feel this looks more like real life because the fingers are directed down.







## Chapter 4















### Group 4: Four Fingers

All Hands With Four Action Fingers:  
**Thumb Must Be Across Palm**



## Four Fingers Spread

01-04-001

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Four Fingers Spread Bent









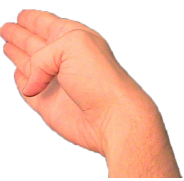



01-04-002

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Four Fingers Unit




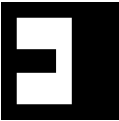





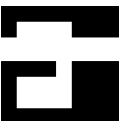

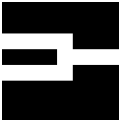
01-04-004

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



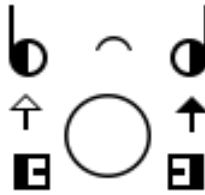
## Four Fingers Unit Bent

01-04-007

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Some Signs Using Group 4





## Chapter 5




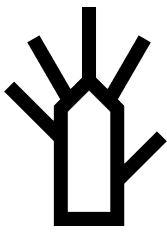









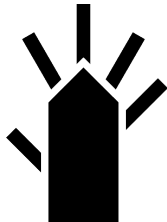
### Group 5: Five Fingers

All Hands With Five Action Fingers:  
**5 Fingers Spread or Together**



## Five Fingers Spread

01-05-001




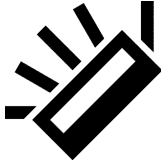








		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane





## Five Fingers Spread Heel


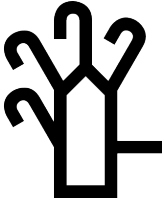

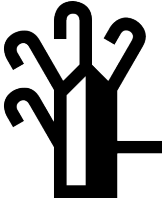

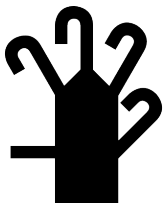

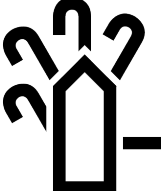

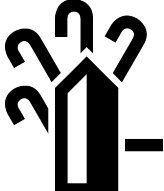

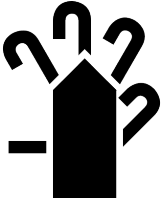
01-05-002

		Palm Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane
		Thumb Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane
		Palm Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane



## Five Fingers Spread, Four Bent













01-05-003

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Five Fingers Spread, Four Bent Heel


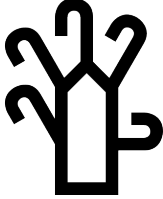
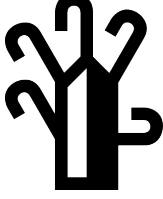


01-05-004

		<p>Palm Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Diagonal Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Thumb Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Diagonal Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Diagonal Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane</p>



## Five Fingers Spread Bent













01-05-005

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Five Fingers Spread, Bent Heel













01-05-006

		<p>Palm Up</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Parallel to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Diagonal Up</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Relating to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Thumb Up</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Parallel to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Diagonal Down</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Relating to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Down</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Parallel to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Diagonal Down</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Relating to Floor Plane</p>



## Five Fingers Spread Cup












01-05-008

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Five Fingers Spread Cup Open






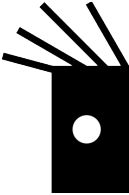






01-05-009

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Five Fingers Spread, Hinge

01-05-012













		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane








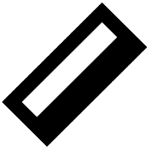








## Flat Hand

01-05-015

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Flat Heel






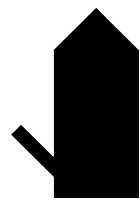





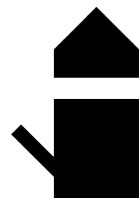
01-05-017

		Palm Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane
		Thumb Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane
		Palm Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane



## Flat, Thumb Side













01-05-018

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Flat, Thumb Side Heel













01-05-019

		Palm Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane
		Thumb Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane
		Palm Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane



## Cup


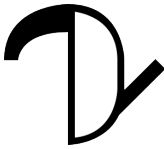

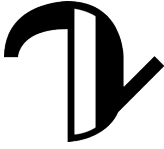

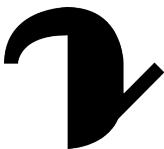



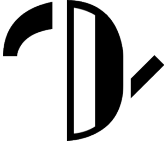

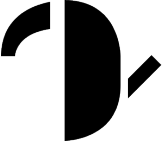
01-05-034

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Cup Thumb Side













01-05-036

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Cup No Thumb


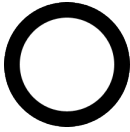



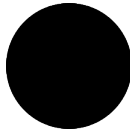


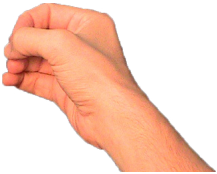



01-05-038

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Circle

01-05-043









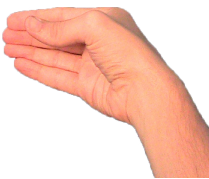



		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane





## Hinge

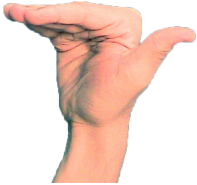











01-05-050

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Hinge, Thumb Side













01-05-053

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane











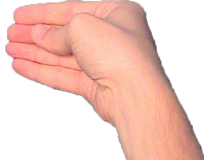


## Hinge, No Thumb

01-05-055

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Angle

01-05-058

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane





## Chapter 6



### Group 6: Baby Finger


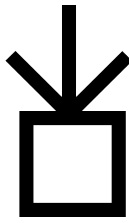



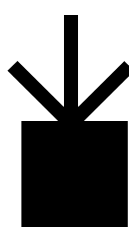

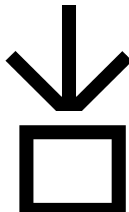



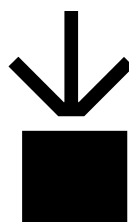
Hands That Focus on the Little Finger

**Little Finger Down or Up**



## Index Middle Ring


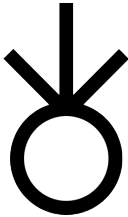

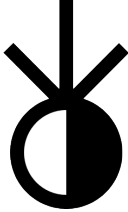








01-06-001

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Middle Ring on Circle






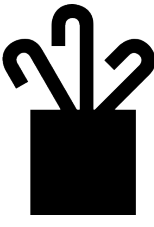

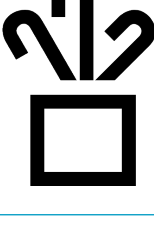

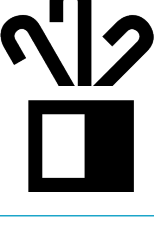

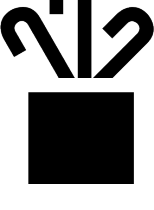
01-06-002

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Middle Ring, Bent


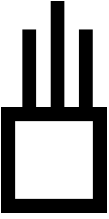










01-06-006

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Middle Ring, Unit









01-06-007

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Middle Ring, Unit Hinge


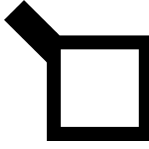

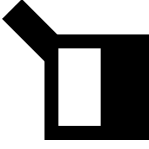

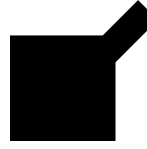

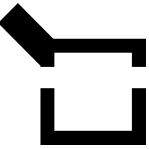

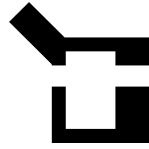

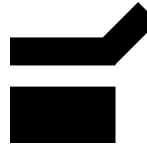
01-06-008

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane




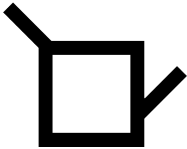

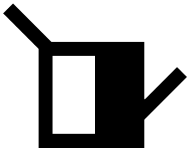

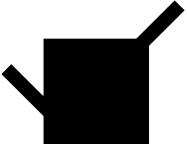

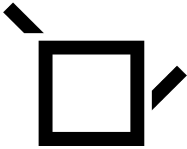

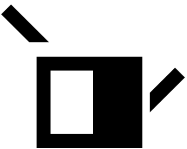

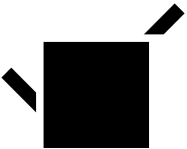
## Baby Up

01-06-013

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane


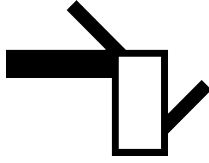

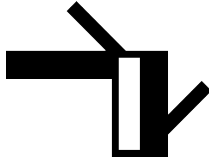

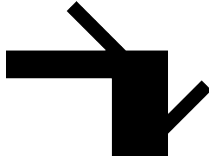
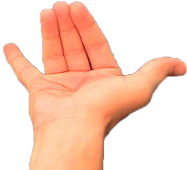
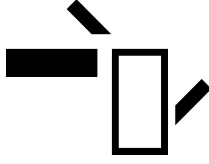
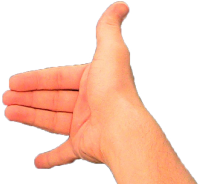
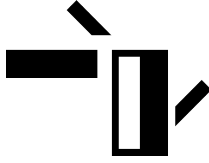

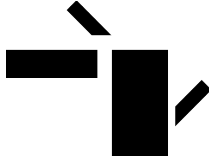
## Baby Thumb

01-06-021

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Baby Thumb on Hinge


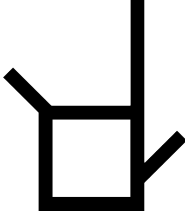

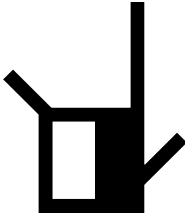

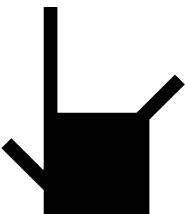

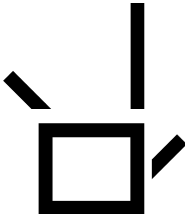

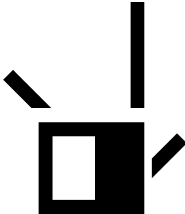

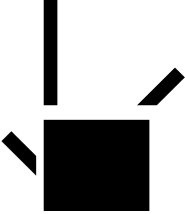
01-06-022

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane




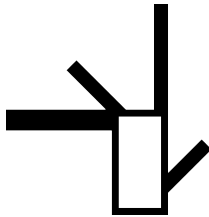

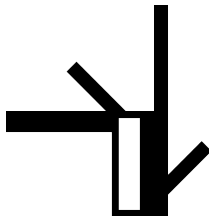

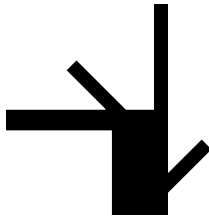
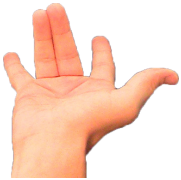
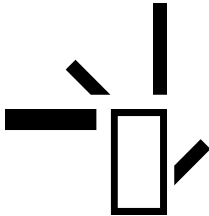
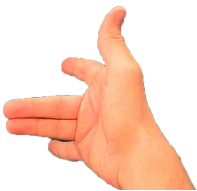
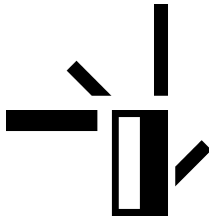

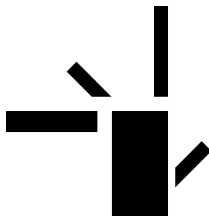
## Baby Index Thumb

01-06-023

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane


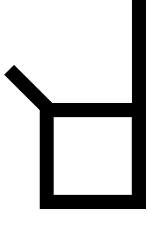

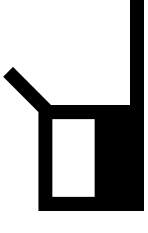

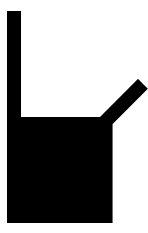

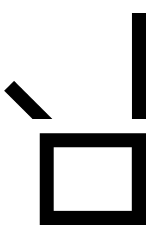

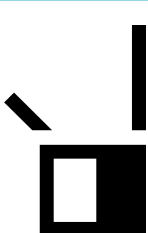

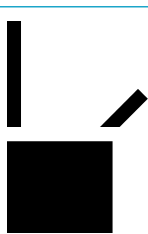
## Baby Index Thumb on Hinge

01-06-024

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Baby Index

01-06-027

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane







## Chapter 7



### Group 7: Ring Finger


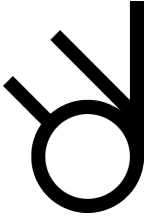

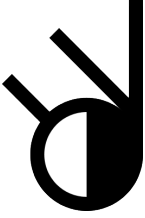

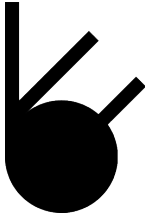

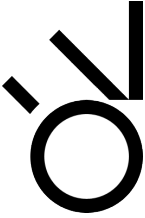



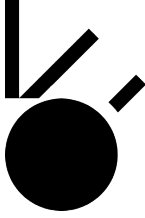
Hands That Focus on the Ring Finger

Ring Finger Down or Up



## Index Middle Baby on Circle

01-07-002

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane




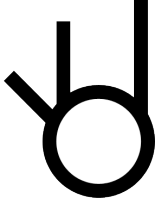

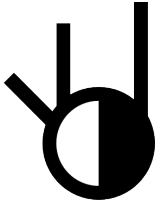

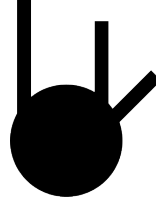

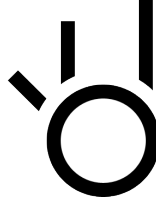

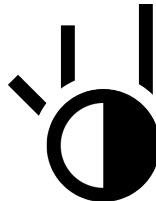

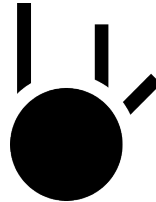
## Chapter 8



**Group 8: Middle Finger**  
Hands That Focus on the Middle Finger  
**Middle Finger Down or Up**


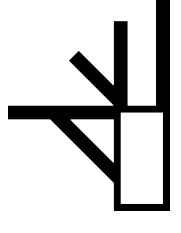

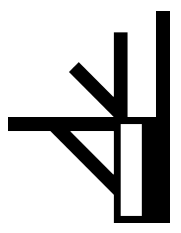

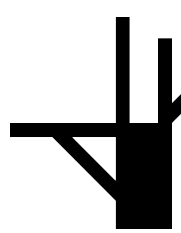

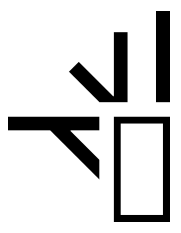

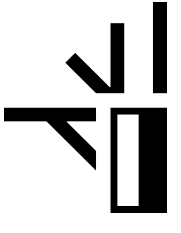

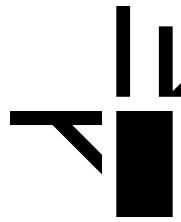
## Index Ring Baby on Circle

01-08-002

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane


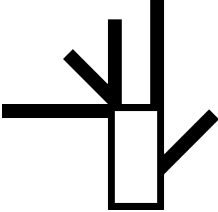

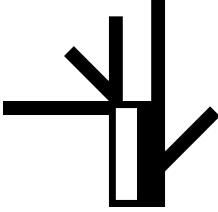

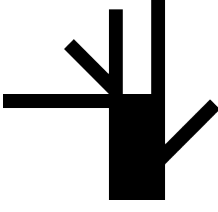

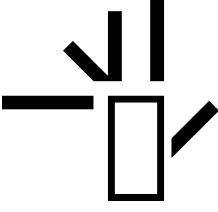

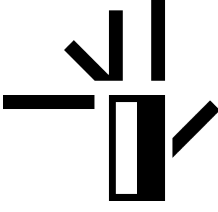

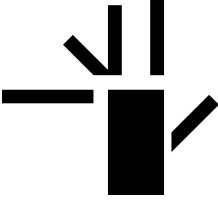
## Index Ring Baby on Angle

01-08-010

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Middle Hinge

01-08-012

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Chapter 9



### Group 9: Index Thumb


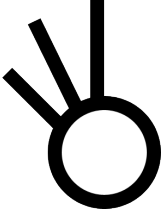

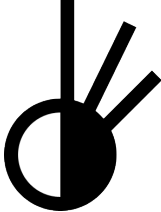

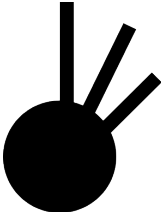

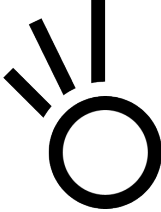

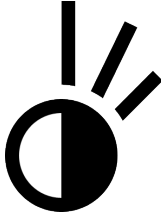

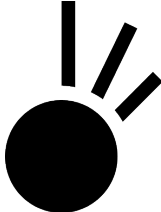
All Hands With Two Action Fingers:

**Index Finger & Thumb**



## Middle Ring Baby on Circle


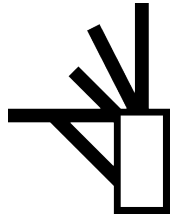

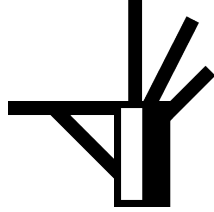

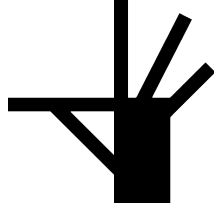

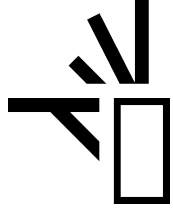

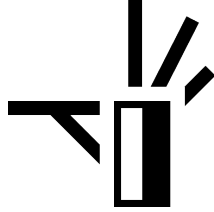

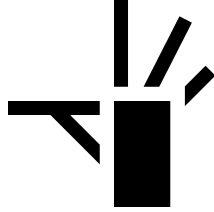
01-09-002

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane




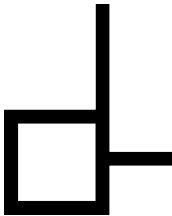

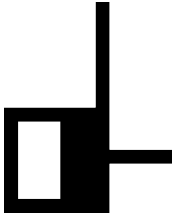

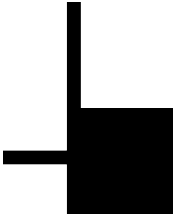

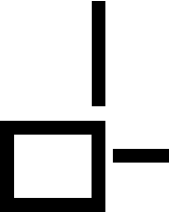

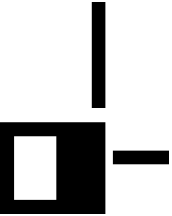

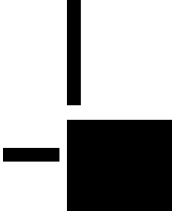
## Middle Ring Baby on Angle

01-09-008

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Index Thumb Side


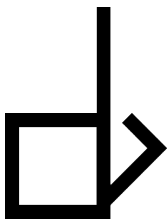

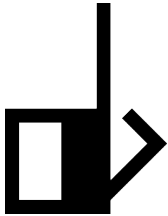

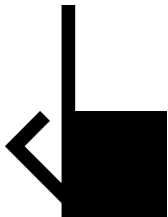

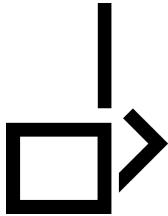

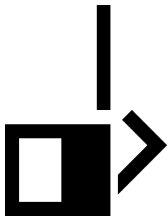

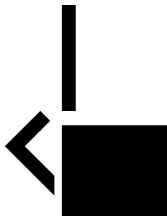
01-09-016

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane




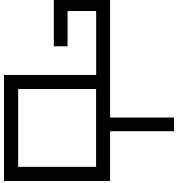

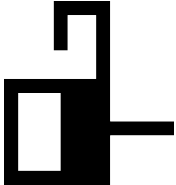



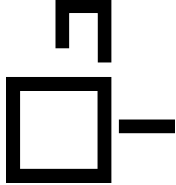

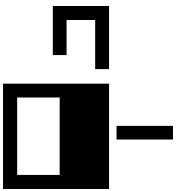

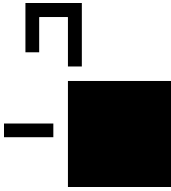
## Index Thumb Side, Thumb Bent

01-09-020

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane


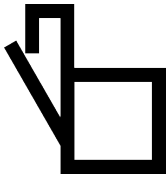

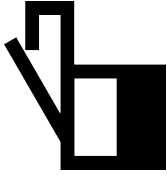

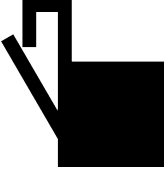

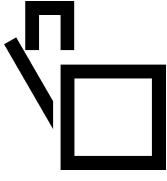

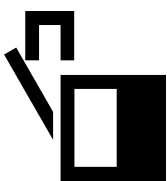

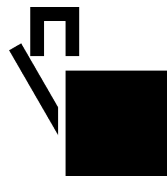
## Index Thumb Side, Index Bent

01-09-021

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

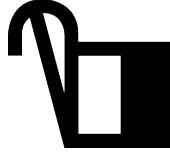

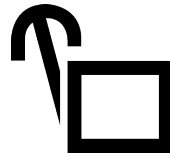

## Index Thumb Hook

01-09-026

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane


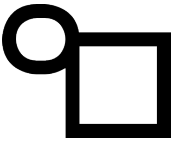





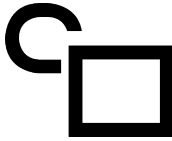




## Index Thumb Curve, Thumb Under

01-09-030

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane








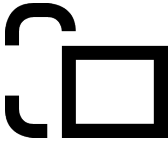




## Index Thumb Circle

01-09-031

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Index Thumb Cup


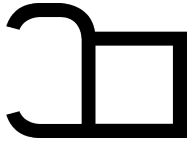










01-09-032

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Thumb Cup Open



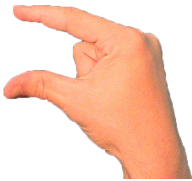









01-09-033

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Thumb Hinge Large



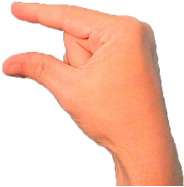









01-09-035

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Thumb Hinge













01-09-036

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Index Thumb Angle

01-09-040

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane





## Chapter 10



### Group 10: Thumb










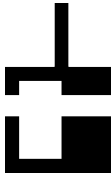


Tight Fists With One Action Finger:

**The Thumb**



## Thumb













01-10-001

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane



## Thumb Heel













01-10-002

		<p>Palm Up</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Parallel to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Diagonal Up</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Relating to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Thumb Up</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Parallel to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Diagonal Down</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Relating to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Down</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Parallel to Floor Plane</p>
		<p>Palm Diagonal Down</p> <p>Front View Heel of Hand</p> <p>Hand Projects Forward</p> <p>Relating to Floor Plane</p>



## Thumb Side Diagonal

01-10-003













		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

















## Thumb Side Bent

01-10-005

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane













## Thumb Between Index Middle

01-10-007

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane








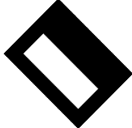




## Fist

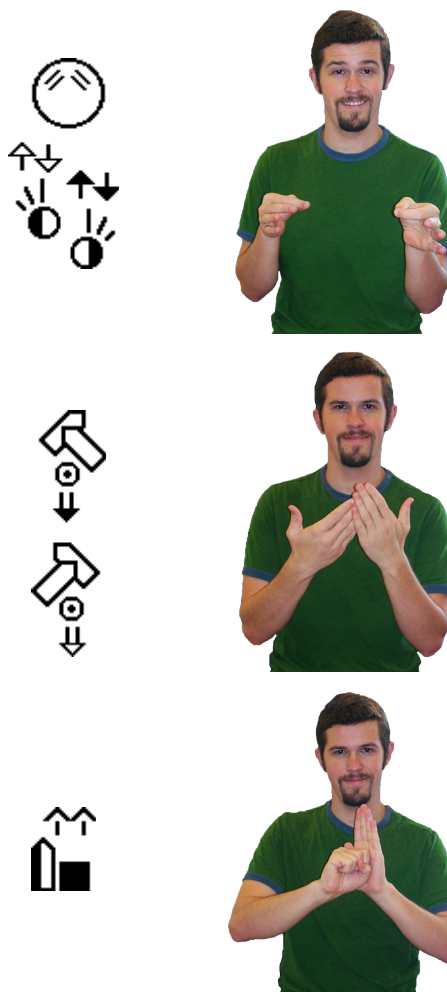
01-10-015

		Palm of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Side of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Back of Hand Front View Parallel Wall Plane
		Palm of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Side of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane
		Back of Hand Top View Parallel Floor Plane

## Fist Heel

01-10-016

		Palm Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane
		Thumb Up Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane
		Palm Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Parallel to Floor Plane
		Palm Diagonal Down Front View Heel of Hand Hand Projects Forward Relating to Floor Plane



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## Chapter 11



### Heel of Hand or Top View?

Fists and Flat Hands from Two Perspectives

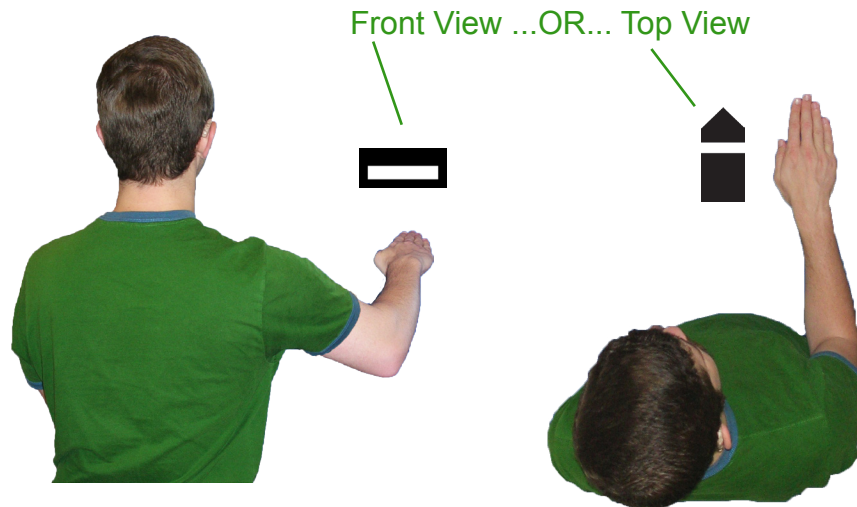
2 Ways to Write Some Positions

## Heel of Hand or Top View?

Flat hands with the fingers pointing straight forward, with the arm parallel to the Floor Plane, can be written from the Front View with the Heel of Hand, or from the traditional Top View:

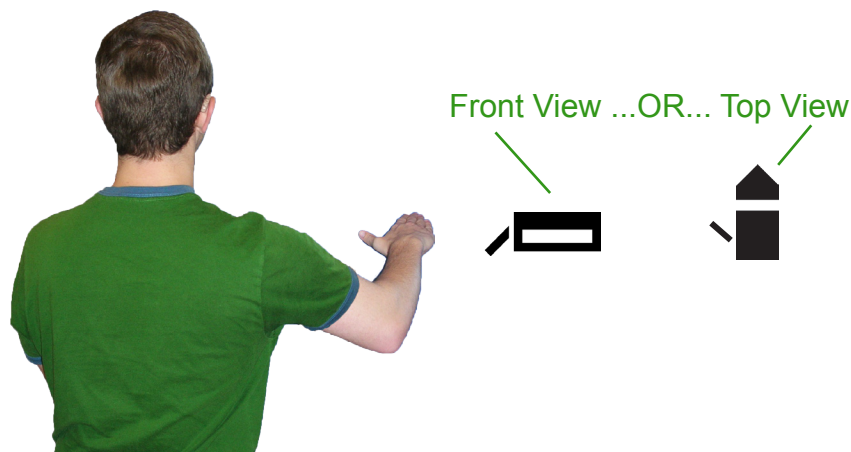
### Two Ways to Write The Same Handshape

...use either symbol...

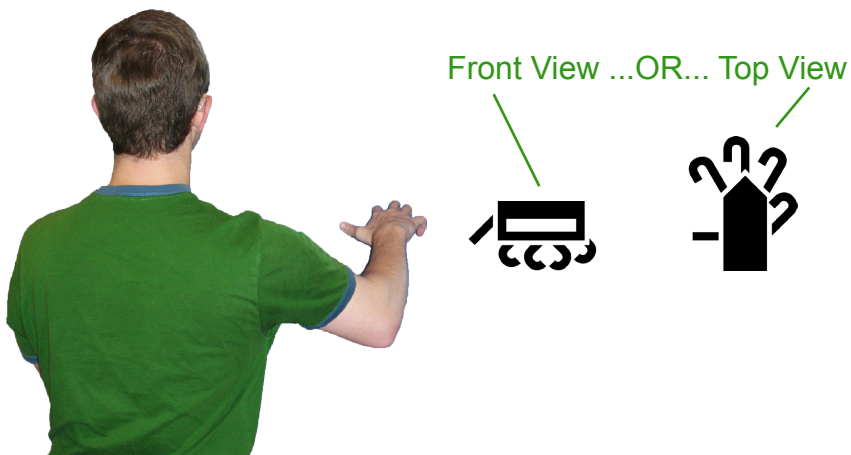
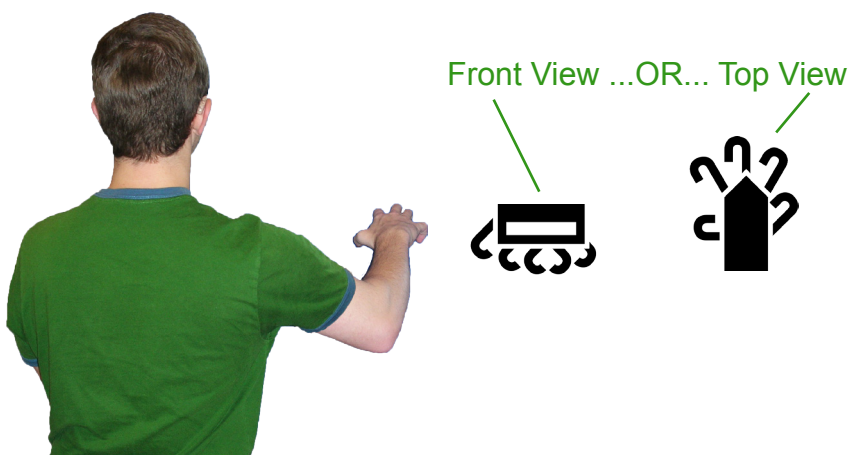
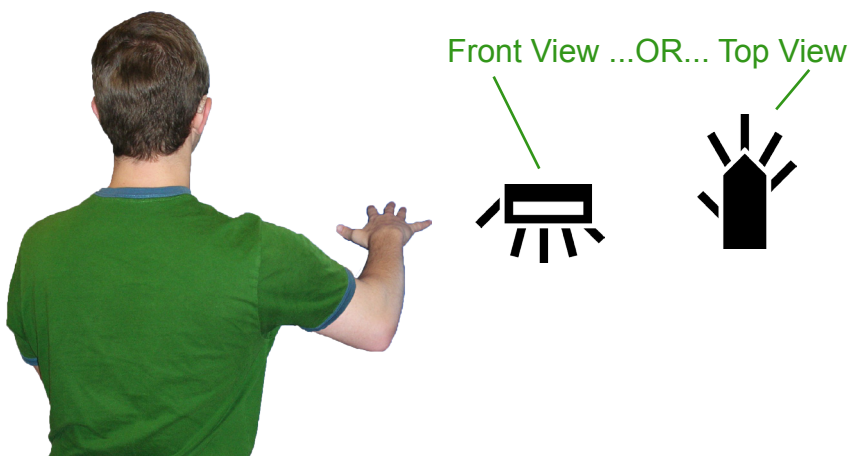


### Two Ways to Write The Same Handshape

...use either symbol...



## Heel of Hand or Top View? Use Either Symbol



## Heel of Hand or Top View?

Fists with the knuckles directed straight forward, with the arm parallel to the Floor Plane, can be written from the Front View with the Heel of Hand, or from the traditional Top View:

### Two Ways to Write The Same Handshape

...use either symbol...



Front View ...OR... Top View



---

### Two Ways to Write The Same Handshape

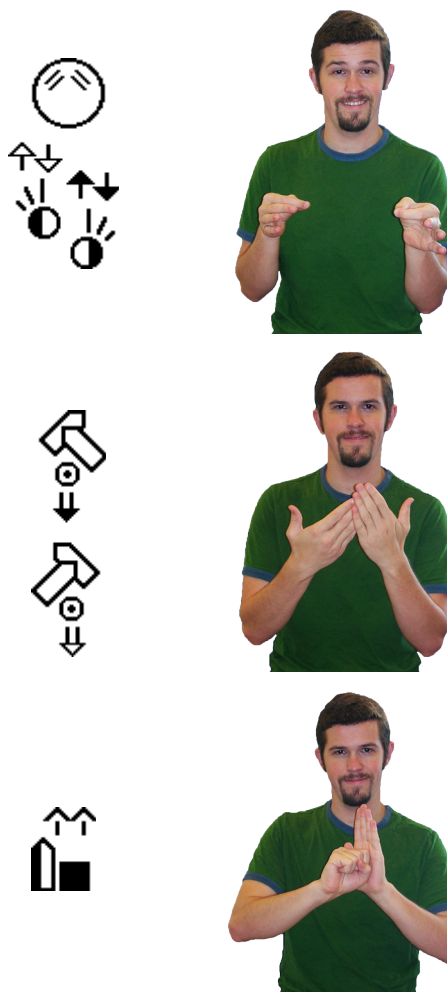
...use either symbol...



Front View ...OR... Top View

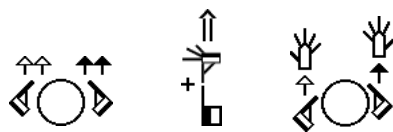






---

## Chapter 12



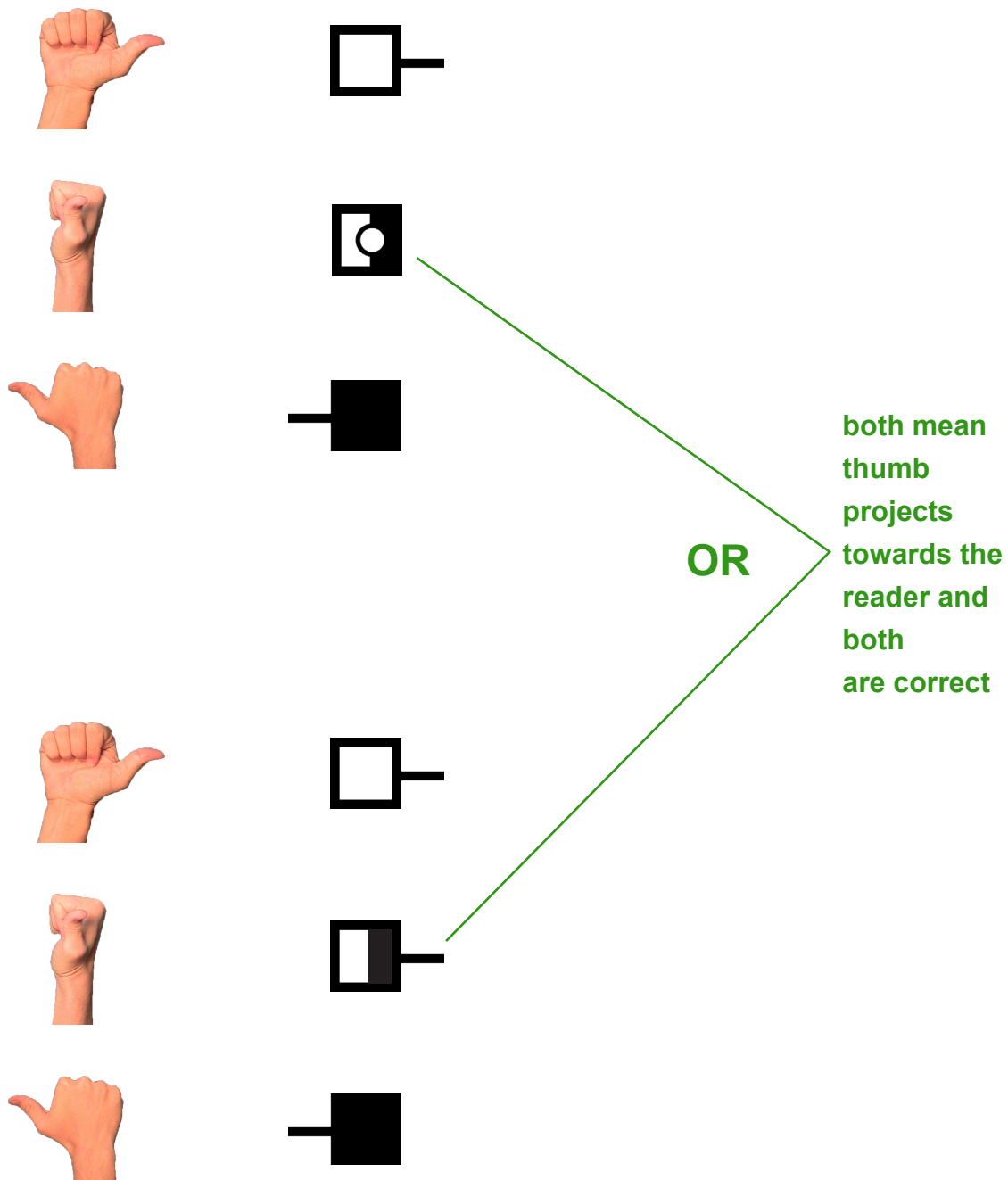
### Instruction & Exceptions

More Information About Hand Symbols

[Examples of Written Signs](#)

## Two Ways to Write Thumb Towards Reader

The side view of the Thumb Hand (see page 272) can be written in two ways. The dot for the thumb projecting directly toward the reader is the official symbol of the ISWA 2010. But some writers choose to write a line for the thumb to the side, rather than the dot. The line for the thumb is always placed on the dark side of the symbol. Both methods mean the same thing and are correct:



## Rootshapes

Like roots to a tree, Rootshapes provide the foundation for all hand symbols. Rootshapes are determined by the shape of the LOWEST finger in the hand-shape. For example, a square for a TIGHT Fist must have at least one finger touching the palm of the hand. A circle for an OPEN fist, has at least one finger close to the palm of the hand, but not touching the palm of the hand.



### Rootshape 01: Tight Fist

Tight Fist: At least 1 finger touches palm



### Rootshape 02: Fist Thumb Across

Tight Fist: At least 1 finger rests on top of thumb across palm



### Rootshape 03: Circle

At least 1 fingertip touches thumbtip in a curve or...  
At least 1 curved finger is close to palm of hand



### Rootshape 04: Cup

At least 1 finger is curved at the Middle Joint & Tip Joint.  
There is NO bend or curve at the Knuckle Joint.



### Rootshape 05: Hinge

At least 1 finger bends at the Knuckle Joint, while  
the Middle Joint and Tip Joint lock completely straight.



### Rootshape 06: Angle

The Hinge, with fingertips and thumb tip touching



### Rootshape 07: Flat Thumb Across

Thumb across palm, four fingers straight up with no bends

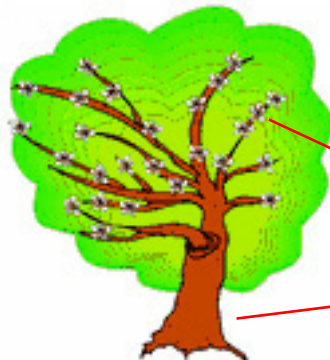


### Rootshape 08: Flat

Five fingers straight up with no bends

## Action Fingers

Once the Rootshape is established, the lines for the fingers are attached. The finger lines are called Action Fingers. They extend from the root of the hand like branches on a tree. Action Fingers are more important than the Rootshape, because they are looked at first, just as observers look at the branches of a tree first. Readers focus on Action Fingers first, since they give meaning to the handshape.



Action Fingers are  
like branches on a tree

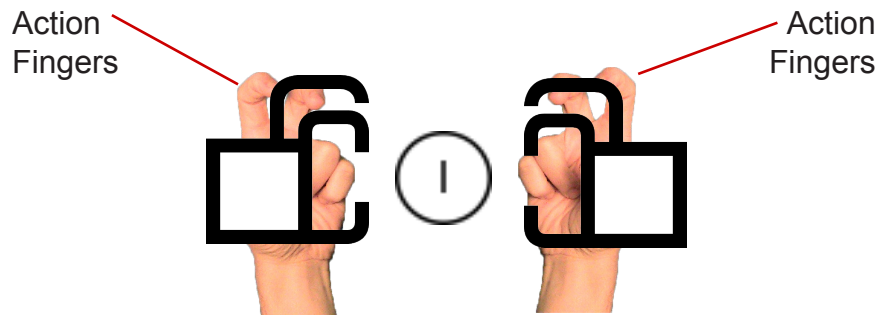
Rootshape provides the  
foundation to the symbol



## Action Fingers Directed Towards The Face & Body

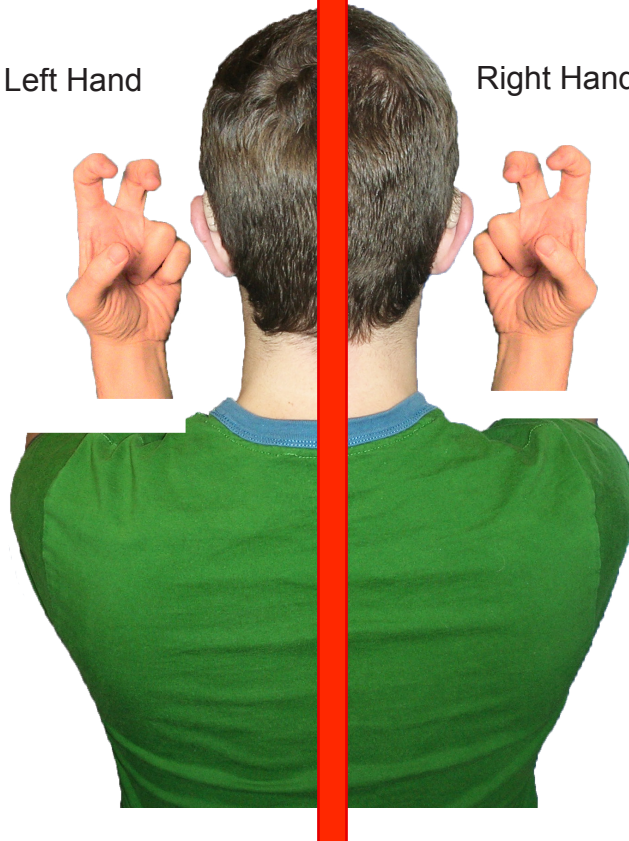
Finger direction relates to the Center of the Body. Action Fingers that bend at the knuckle joint in Angle, Hinge, Cup or Curve hand positions direct the fingers into the Center of the Body. The white palm shows the palm is facing the body, with a slight hint that the palm is slightly turned toward the Center too.

### Fingers Are Directed Toward the Center ...when the palm is facing the body...



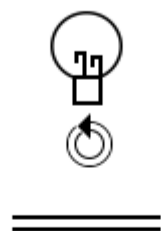
Left Hand

Right Hand

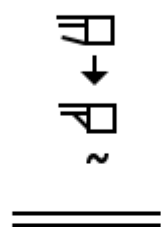




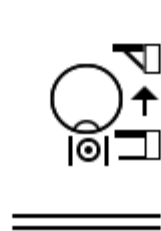
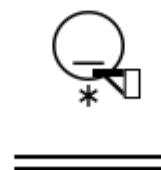
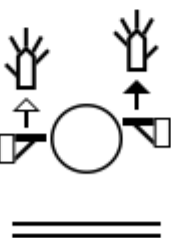
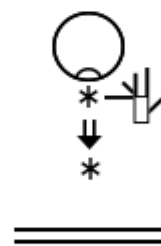
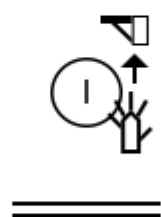
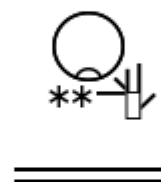
Some  
ASL  
signs  
as  
examples:



glass  
oral  
no-to-me  
wolf  
information



Jew  
clown  
going out  
illness  
lucky  
prefer  
birthday  
eat  
blow a kiss

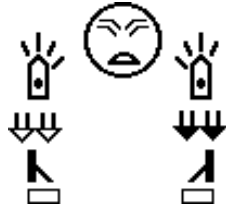


## Action Fingers Directed Up

### Angle Hand Symbols

Point the tip of the angled fingers in meaningful directions.

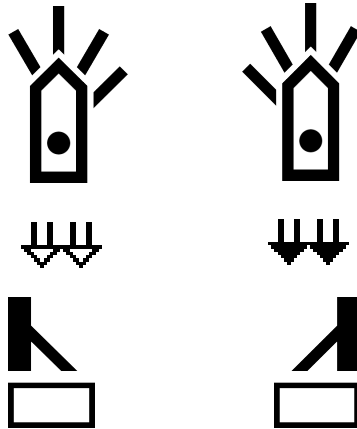
When writing Angle Hands, write the direction of the fingers based on what "feels correct" for the meaning of the sign. Then look at your palm. Where is the palm facing? If the palm is facing the ceiling, then it is parallel to the floor. It will be white with a space at the knuckle joint.



ASL  
sign for  
WET,  
or SOFT



See  
page 100  
for  
Five Fingers  
Spread  
with  
Thumb  
Forward



Finger  
Direction  
Is Up



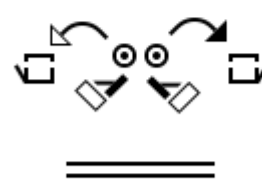
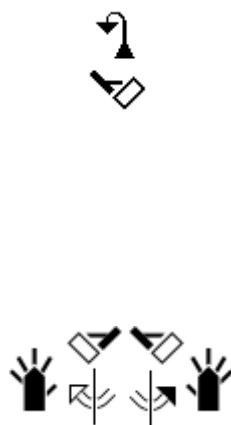
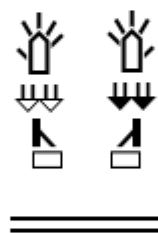
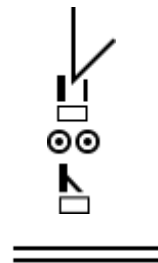
See  
page 151  
for  
Angle  
Handshape



Some  
ASL  
signs  
as  
examples:

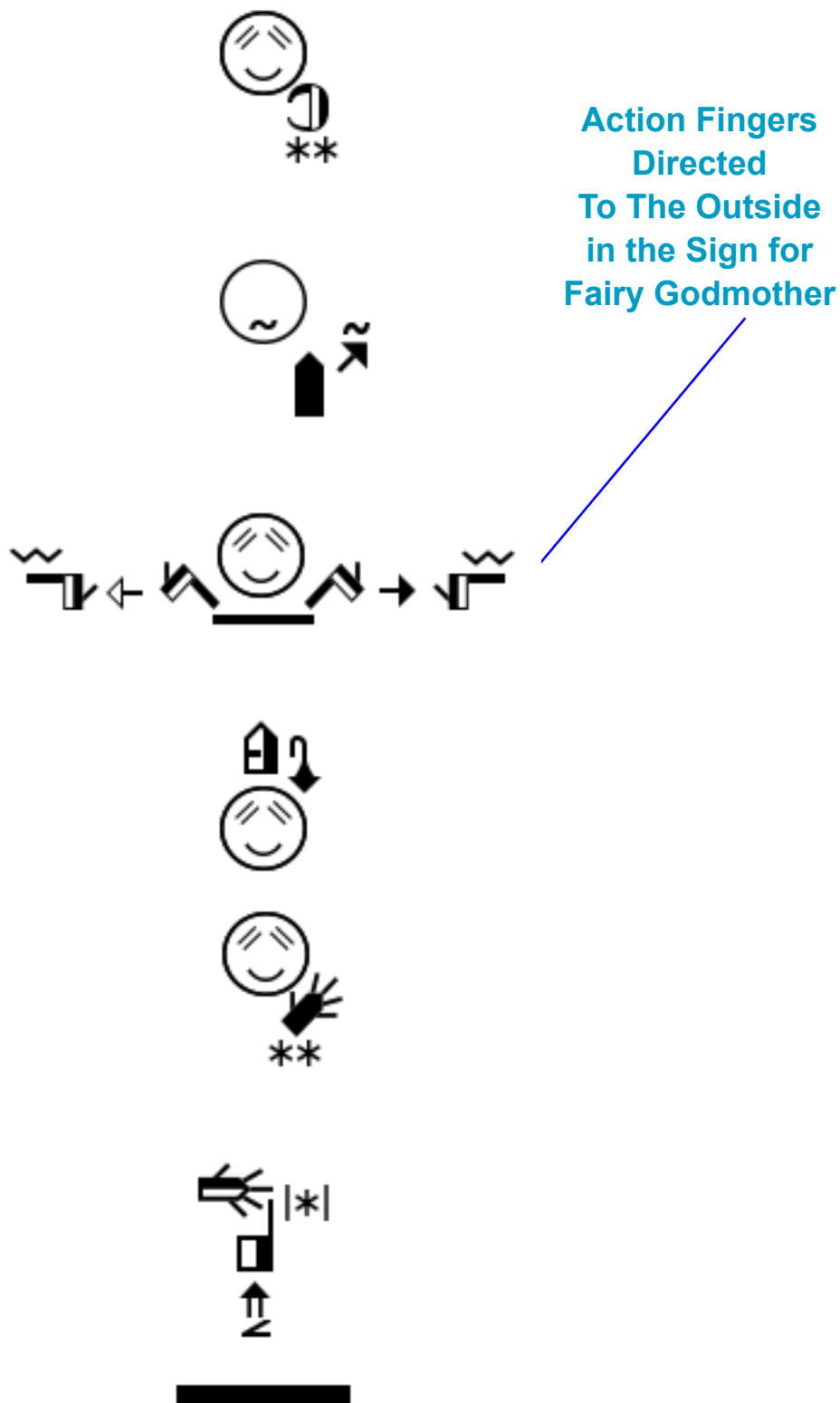


Jewish  
grow  
soft  
soft  
soft  
give to you  
lose  
money  
poor  
waste  
gay  
dissolve  
twelve



## Action Fingers Directed Out Away From The Body

This is very rare. If the majority of Action Fingers are directed to the outside, away from the Center of the Body, as in the sign for FAIRY GODMOTHER in ASL, then it is written pointing out.

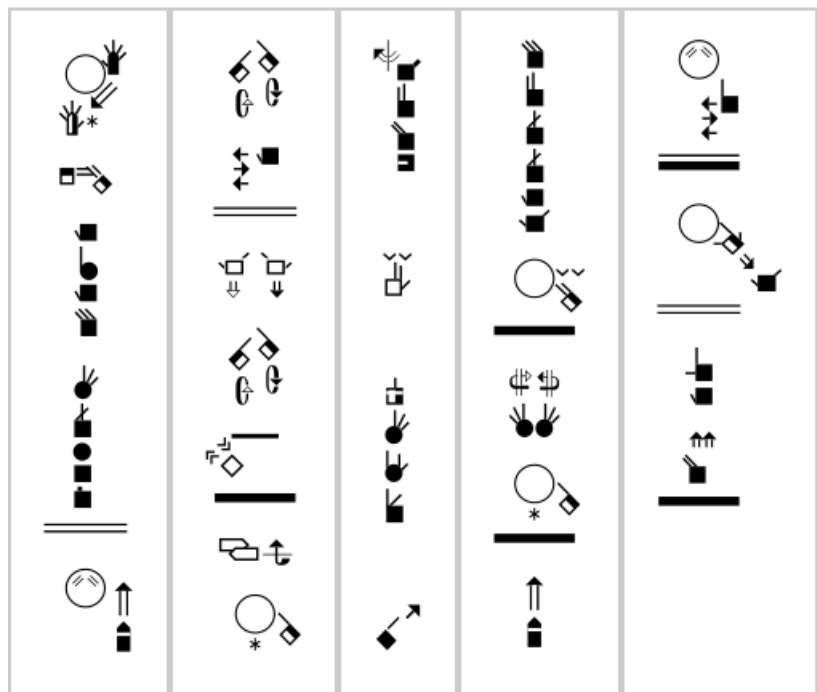




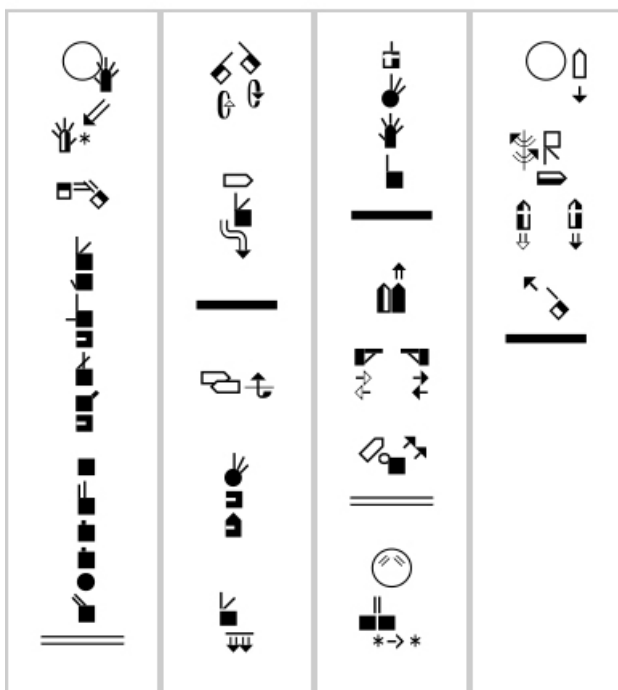
## About The Authors



Adam Frost



Valerie Sutton



# SignWriting Instruction

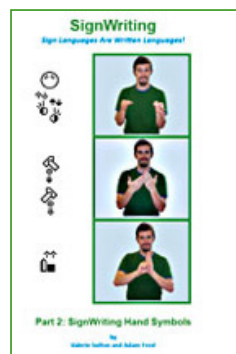
[SignWriting.org/lessons](http://SignWriting.org/lessons) • [SignWriting.org/shop](http://SignWriting.org/shop)



## 1 SignWriting Reference Manual

### Manual 1: SignWriting Basics

Learn the basics of SignWriting with this slender, 42 page, spiral-bound manual. An introduction to reading and writing any sign language, it gives a summary of hand symbols, contact symbols, finger movements, arm movements, facial expressions, and reading of sign language literature. All examples are in American Sign Language (ASL). Free for download on the web, and only \$10.00 in the SignWriting Shop. ISBN: 978-0-914336-49-5



## 2 SignWriting Reference Manual

### Manual 2: SignWriting Hand Symbols

This 300-page spiral-bound reference manual devotes a full page to each of the 261 hand symbols of the International SignWriting Alphabet (ISWA 2010), used to write over 40 sign languages on the web in SignPuddle Online. Each page shows one handshape with 6 photos showing 6 different palm facings. The corresponding SignWriting symbol is placed next to each photo. Additional SignWriting instruction is included in the front and the back of the book. ISBN: 978-0-914336-86-0



## 3 SignWriting Lessons on the Web

Web lessons show moving handshapes with symbols Adam Frost's photos of his own hands move from one palm facing to another, on 261 web pages, each devoted to one of the 261 hand symbols of the ISWA 2010. This popular site is located in SignWriting Lessons Online. Take a visit:

ISWA 2010 Symbol Lessons Online

Animated GIFs by Adam Frost

<http://www.signwriting.org/lessons/iswa/>



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SIGNWRITING ASL HAND SYMBOLS